



Success News

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SWEET PEA HAS A KNACK FOR SUCCESS

Del Rio, TX – Mary and Armando Fernandez have a knack for restoring old, used, and antique furniture. They found they had a talent for doing so and began a weekend business by selling restored furniture at art and craft shows in Del Rio and surrounding communities. After a year, and what appeared to be a niche, Mr. and Mrs. Fernandez decided to go into business full time in Del Rio. They of course found a dilapidated building they wanted to restore and open as their store-front – Sweet Pea.

Knowing what they wanted to do, but unsure how to proceed Mr. and Mrs. Fernandez approached the Sul Ross State University/Rio Grande College-SBDC in August 2002 and visited with Business Development Specialist Elizabeth Peña. They discussed their idea and the niche they had uncovered with Elizabeth, who in turn assisted them with their business plan and cash flow projections. Mrs. Fernandez jokingly states Elizabeth “wrote a book” but states it was worth it as the lender “figured we were not a risk” after his review of the well prepared business plan. During the preparation process, they were introduced to the Small Business Administration

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LowDoc program. Their loan request was a perfect candidate for this loan guaranty program.

With their business plan in hand and prepared to discuss their new venture, Mr. and Mrs. Fernandez approached Mr. John Northcutt of Del Rio National Bank. Their SBA LowDoc application was approved and in October 2002, they were able to close on their dream.

Sweet Pea, housed in its refurbished store-front at 104 Center Drive, Del Rio, TX, opened its doors in December 2002 in time for holiday shoppers. They were a great success and their success has continued. They now sell restored furniture, arts and crafts, carry a wide assortment of jewelry, and various knick-knacks such as angels and crosses.

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The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) was created by Congress in 1953 to support and encourage the creation and success of the small businesses. SBA offers a wide range of financial and business assistance and disaster relief services

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